

# SPENDING TIME WITH THE PROPHETS

the book of Isaiah

Isaiah's prophecy is spoken during the reigns of four kings of Judah: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.

## **Reign of Uzziah (Azariah):**

2 Kings 15:1-7

2 Chronicles 26:1-23

## **Reign of Jotham:**

2 Kings 15:32-38

2 Chronicles 27:1-9

## **Reign of Ahaz:**

2 Kings 16:1-20

2 Chronicles 28:1-27

## **Reign of Hezekiah:**

2 Kings 18:1-20:21

2 Chronicles 29:1-32:33

The messages in Isaiah's book were spoken during the years 739-686 BC (approximately), starting in the last year of Uzziah's life and ending sometime in the latter half of Hezekiah's reign. Uzziah's 52-year reign had been one of great righteousness, but he was close to death. Jotham would be very righteous as well, but some of the people would begin worshipping corruptly. Ahaz would be an exceedingly wicked king, refusing to put his faith in the Lord. Hezekiah would make mistakes but would prove to be a very faithful king. The words of Isaiah would be critically important for these kings and the people of Judah.

The book falls naturally into two sections: chapters 1-39 and chapters 40-66. The context of the first section is the Assyrian Empire, which is beginning to take over the world. The second section looks ahead to the joyful time when Judah will be released from

Babylonian captivity. Throughout his book, Isaiah will constantly describe the days when the Lord has redeemed Israel/Judah and made her invincible, causing all nations to gather to her. It is here that we can see God's plan for His church.

## **OUTLINE OF ISAIAH**

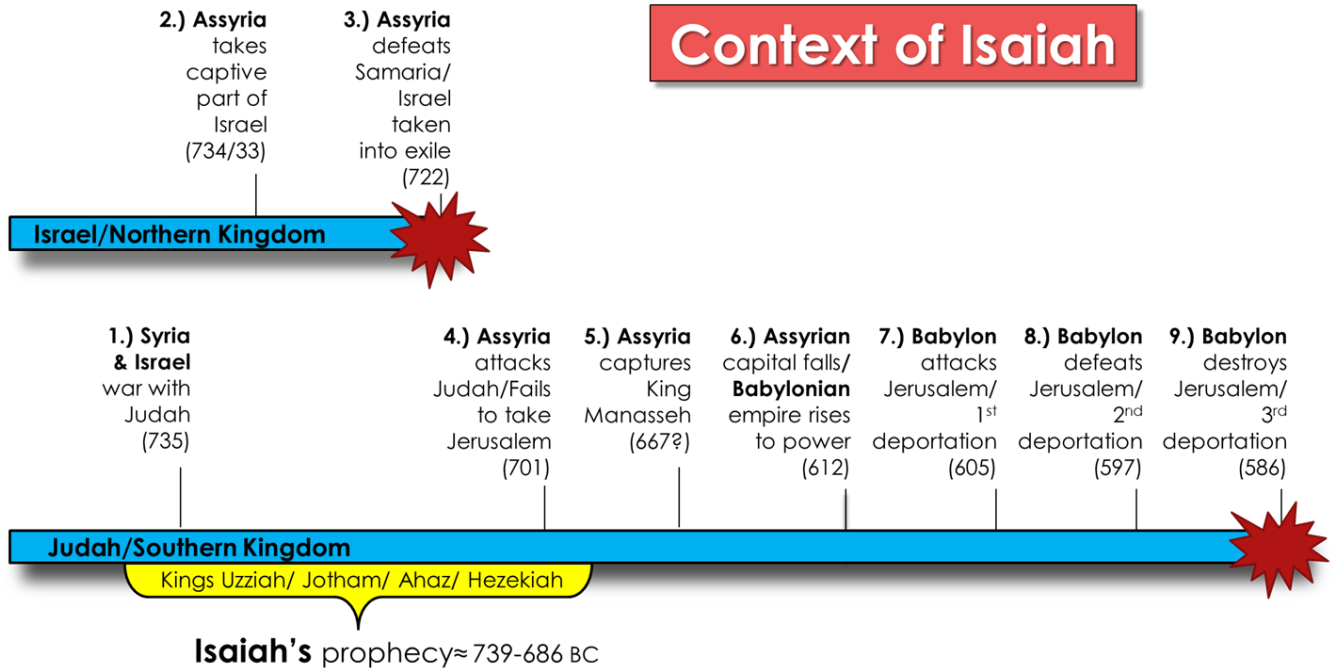
### **I. JUDAH'S FUTURE IN LIGHT OF THE PRESENT ASSYRIAN INVASION (Ch. 1-39)**

- A.** Intro prophecies about Judah (Ch. 1-5)
- B.** Flashback to when Isaiah was called (Ch. 6)
- C.** King Ahaz and the Assyrian invasion/ Prophecies about the future King (Ch. 7-12)
- D.** The King's power over the surrounding nations (Ch. 13-23)
- E.** The King's power over the earth/ The redemption of Israel (Ch. 24-27)
- F.** The King brings judgment and redemption (Ch. 28-35)
- G.** When the King saved Hezekiah and Jerusalem (Ch. 36-37)
- H.** Flashback to when Hezekiah went from trusting God to trusting in man/ Babylonian invasion predicted (Ch. 38-39)

### **II. GOD'S DELIVERANCE AND THE FUTURE RETURN FROM BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY (Ch. 40-66)**

- A.** God comforts His people (Ch. 40-57)
  - 1.** "Her warfare is ended" (Ch. 40-48)
  - 2.** "Her iniquity is pardoned" (Ch. 49-57)
- B.** God's glorious consummation of His plan (Ch. 58-66)
  - 1.** "She has received double for all her sins" (Ch. 58-66)

# Context of Isaiah



## Significant Events in Israel/Judah's History

### **1.) Syria & Israel war with Judah** (2 Kings 16:5-6; 2 Chron 28:5-21)

735 BC- (known as the Syro-Ephraimite War) Assyria had gained power and was requiring tribute from many nations, including Syria and Israel. Rezin (king of Syria) and Pekah (king of Israel) rebelled against Assyria. They tried to pressure Judah into joining their cause against Assyria, but Judah's king, Ahaz, refused. Therefore, Syria and Israel led a war against Judah, hoping to replace Ahaz with a puppet-king who would do whatever they wanted. Judah suffered heavy losses.

### **2.) Assyria takes captive part of Israel** (2 Kings 15:29; 1 Chron 5:25-26; 2 Kings 16:7-9):

734/33 BC- After Judah had suffered terribly from the war against Syria and Israel, king Ahaz decided to ask Assyria for aid. Assyria agreed, but required Judah to become a vassal kingdom and pay heavy monetary tribute. Ahaz accepted, and this weakened the kingdom of Judah. Assyria came and attacked Israel. The Assyrian king Pul (also known as Tiglath-pileser) conquered and deported the tribes of Naphtali, Reuben, Gad, Manasseh, as well as cities in other parts of Israel. (Pekah was king of Israel at the time.) Assyria also came and destroyed the Syrian capital, killing king Rezin and ending the Syrian nation.

### **3.) Assyria defeats Samaria/Israel taken into exile** (2 Kings 17:1-23; 2 Kings 18:9-12):

722- Because Israel had continually rejected God and adopted the practices of the pagan nations, God had the Assyrians completely conquer Israel. Hoshea, Israel's king at the time, was captured and imprisoned. Assyria then engaged in a three-year siege of Samaria (Israel's capital city), led by Assyrian king Shalmaneser V. He died just before the city was taken. His successor Sargon II stepped in right as Samaria was defeated and claimed the glory. Afterward the rest of Israel was easily conquered, the people were taken into exile, and the northern kingdom was no more. Hezekiah was king of Judah at the time.

#### **4.) Assyria attacks Judah/ Fails to take Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:13-19:37; 2 Chronicles 32:1-23)**

701- Back when Ahaz was king, Judah had agreed to pay monetary tribute to the Assyrians. After Hezekiah took the throne, he rebelled against Assyria and stopped serving their king. The Assyrian king Sennacherib responded by attacking and subduing many cities in Judah. This caused Hezekiah to apologize and offer to pay whatever the king asked. Sennacherib demanded an enormous amount of gold and silver. After receiving the payment, Sennacherib still intended to conquer Jerusalem (Judah's capital) anyway, and take its inhabitants into Assyrian captivity. Because of Hezekiah's faith, God protected the city of Jerusalem and subdued the Assyrians, which eventually led to the death of Sennacherib.

#### **5.) Assyria captures king Manasseh (2 Chronicles 33:1-20)**

667? (This date is uncertain)- When Manasseh became king of Judah, he filled the land with an abundance of immorality. The people of Judah became more wicked than the actual Canaanites. Therefore, God had the Assyrians come and capture king Manasseh, and they brought him to Babylon as a prisoner. Manasseh would then repent, which led God to show mercy. The Lord brought Manasseh back to Jerusalem to rule again as king of Judah.

#### **6.) Assyrian capital falls/ Babylonian empire rises to power (Nahum 3:1-19; Zephaniah 2:13-15;)**

612- Babylon, along with the Medes and other nations, led an attack on Nineveh in 612. Nineveh was the capital city of the Assyrians at the time. Once Nineveh fell, the Assyrians began to shrink in power and the Babylonian empire soon dominated the world. The prophets Nahum and Zephaniah spoke of Assyria/Nineveh's downfall, and how it was God's punishment for Assyria's wickedness.

#### **7.) Babylon attacks Jerusalem/ 1<sup>st</sup> deportation (Daniel 1:1-7)**

605- After the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar successfully defeated Egypt, he came and attacked Jerusalem. Jehoiakim was king of Judah at the time. Nebuchadnezzar deported many young men of the royal family and the nobility. (Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were some of the young men who were deported.) Jehoiakim was forced to serve as a vassal to Nebuchadnezzar, paying him regular monetary tribute.

### **8.) Babylon captures Jerusalem/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Deportation (2 Kings 24:1-17)**

597- After serving Nebuchadnezzar for 3 years, Jehoiakim rebelled. Bands of Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites came and attacked Judah. Jehoiakim was killed. Nebuchadnezzar's army came and began attacking Jerusalem (now ruled by Jehoiachin). Once Nebuchadnezzar himself arrived, the king of Judah surrendered. The people of Jerusalem were deported, including officials, soldiers, craftsmen, and skilled laborers. Only very poor people of Judah remained in the land. King Jehoiachin was also taken to Babylon, and his own uncle (Zedekiah) was left by Nebuchadnezzar to rule Judah.

### **9.) Babylon destroys Jerusalem/ 3<sup>rd</sup> Deportation (2 Kings 24:18-25:21; 2 Chronicles 36:11-21)**

586- After several years of serving Nebuchadnezzar, king Zedekiah decided to rebel. Babylon came and surrounded Jerusalem, spending the next year or two starving out the inhabitants. Eventually Zedekiah and his army fled out of the city by night, but the Babylonians overtook them. Nebuchadnezzar had Zedekiah taken away to Babylon. The city of Jerusalem was destroyed, including the walls of the city and the temple. Most of the remaining inhabitants of Judah were taken into exile. A few were left behind in order to tend the land. God declared that the destruction of Jerusalem was the result of Judah's wickedness.